

Message Text

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ACTION MMO-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PER-05 /022 W
-----123262 242031Z /64

P 241835Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2377

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 01311

FOR M/MO AND EUR/EX

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AMGT, AFSP
SUBJ: HIRING LIMITATION - REQUEST TO HIRE FSL EMPLOYEES

REF: STATE 3165

1. THE EMBASSY CURRENTLY HAS A TOTAL OF 9 FSL VACANCIES (7 CORE AND 2 DAS) ON THE STAFFS OF THE BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL, GENERAL SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS BRANCHES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION. WE URGENTLY REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT'S AUTHORIZATION TO HIRE REPLACEMENT EMPLOYEES FOR THESE ESSENTIAL POSITIONS.

2. POSITIONS TO BE FILLED ARE:

(A) B&M ASSISTANT, 5B-18: DAS POSITION DEVOTED TO PROCESSING TRAVEL CLAIMS OF APPROXIMATELY 12 SERVICED AGENCIES AS AGREED UPON UNDER CURRENT FAAS REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENTS. HEAVY VOLUME IS CONSTANT, SOMETIMES REACHING AS HIGH AS 300 VOUCHERS A MONTH. INCUMBENT WILL RESIGN EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 3, 1978; DISRUPTION OF SERVICE AND RISK OF BACKLOG WILL BE MINIMIZED IF RECRUITMENT CAN BEGIN IMMEDIATELY.

(B) PERSONNEL ASSISTANT, 5E-8: CORE POSITION CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH SERVICES TO AMERICAN PERSONNEL, INCLUDING ISSUANCE OF FCO AND OTHER IDENTITY CARDS, PREPARATION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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TMS, PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING MATTERS CONCERNING UK-COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES, AND VARIETY OF SIMILAR DUTIES. IN ADDITION TO NORMALLY HEAVY WORKLOAD INVOLVED IN ASSISTING LARGE AMERICAN AND FSL STAFF, PERSONNEL OFFICE AT THIS TIME IS ENGAGED IN PREPARING TO IMPLEMENT LATEST WAGE SURVEY, CONDUCTING RETAIL PRICE SCHEDULE SURVEY, REACHING FINAL STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW UK PENSION

SCHEME, LOOKING AHEAD TO PREPARATION OF 1978 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORTS AND FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTION IN SPRING-SUMMER. WITH ONLY ONE AMERICAN OFFICER, VACANCY IN ANY FSL POSITION CREATES HARDSHIP IN CARRYING OUT REQUIREMENTS LEVIED ON PERSONNEL OFFICE.

(C) GENERAL SERVICES SECRETARY, 5D-4: CORE POSITION, SECRETARY AND GENERAL ASSISTANT TO SUPERVISORY GSO. GSO WHOSE OFFICE IS PHYSICALLY SEPARATED FROM MAJOR AREA OF HIS OPERATION, IS IN EFFECT ISOLATED WITHOUT BASIC SECRETARIAL SUPPORT, THEREBY HAMPERING THE EFFICIENCY OF HIS DIRECTION OF GSO ACTIVITIES.

(D) GENERAL SERVICES CHAUFFEUR, 5D-79: CORE POSITION, WHICH BECOMES VACANT ON JANUARY 31, 1978 UPON RETIREMENT OF INCUMBENT. EVEN WHEN MOTOR POOL COMPLEMENT IS AT FULL STRENGTH, EMBASSY IS OFTEN HARD-PRESSED TO PROVIDE RANGE OF SERVICES REQUIRED FOR THE MANY VIP VISITORS WHO MUST RECEIVE ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS TO MEET MINIMUM DAILY NEEDS OF THE MISSION.

(E) GENERAL SERVICES MAINTENANCE POSITIONS, 5D-60, 61, 65, 81: CORE POSITIONS, ALL VITAL TO LOCAL OPERATIONS. OVER PAST YEAR THE EMBASSY'S HOUSING RESPONSIBILITY HAS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY. GSO MAINTENANCE STAFF HAS BEEN CARRYING THE LOAD UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE, QUALITY OF WORK HAS BEEN AFFECTED AND STAFF MORALE HAS SUFFERED; MORE WIDESPREAD EFFECT IS DISSATISFACTION AND FREQUENT IN-

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CONVENIENCE ON PART OF OTHER EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, IN RECENT PROGRAM OF REDUCTIONS EMBASSY LOST TOTAL OF 6 POSITIONS, 4 OF WHICH CAME FROM THE MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN STAFF OF GS. FURTHER, FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, RECRUITMENT IN THIS AREA OF THE UK LABOR MARKET IS OFTEN DIFFICULT, THE WHOLE EMPLOYMENT PROCESS CAN BE A PROTRACTED ONE, AND TURNOVER IN THESE POSITIONS IS RELATIVELY FREQUENT. FOR ALL THESE REASONS THEREFORE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED TO CARRY ON RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOY THESE SKILLED WORKMEN WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE TO DO SO. REQUIREMENTS AT THIS TIME ARE FOR ONE ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN, TWO MECHANICAL TECHNICIANS AND ONE PLUMBER.

(F) COMMUNICATIONS/TELEPHONE OPERATOR, 5C-39: DAS POSITION, ONE OF 15 TELEPHONE OPERATORS WHO STAFF THE EMBASSY SWITCHBOARD AND THE LONDON TOLL NETWORK. THE DEPARTMENT IS ALREADY FULLY AWARE OF THE VOLUME OF WORK WHICH IS HANDLED WITH SPEED, EFFICIENCY AND SKILL BY THE EMBASSY'S SUPERB STAFF OF TELEPHONE OPERATORS. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THESE HIGH STANDARDS, ALL POSITIONS MUST BE FILLED. BECAUSE OF NECESSITY FOR SHIFT WORK, ETC. THIS IS ALSO AN AREA WHERE TURNOVER AMONG YOUNGER, NEWER EMPLOYEES CAN BE RELATIVELY HIGH AND RECRUITMENT SOMETIMES DIFFICULT. AS WITH GSO TECHNICIANS, THE EMBASSY REQUESTS AUTHORITY TO RECRUIT AND EMPLOY WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY UNCLASSIFIED

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ARISES TO OBTAIN A SUITABLE CANDIDATE.

3. THERE ARE ADDITIONAL VACANCIES ON THE EMBASSY STAFF IN THE CONSULAR SECTION, WHICH WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL. WE WILL APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF OUR JUSTIFICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT IN EACH OF THE INSTANCES LISTED ABOVE, AND THE PROMPT RECEIPT OF AUTHORITY TO FILL ALL THESE POSITIONS, EACH OF WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CONTINUING OPERATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LONDON01311
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780036-0228
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780130/aaaaayrd.tel
Line Count: 161
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 48eda1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION MMO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 3165
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3725650
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIRING LIMITATION - REQUEST TO HIRE FSL EMPLOYEES
TAGS: AMGT, AFSP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/48eda1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014